

for placing *Zenaida aurita* in one genus and at the same time maintaining *Melopelia* as distinct. I therefore lump the two under *Zenaida* Bonaparte 1838, which has many years priority over *Melopelia* Bonaparte 1855.

In closing, just a word about *Zenaidura yucatanensis* Lawrence. Salvadori and Ridgway both suspected this bird of being a hybrid, both pointing out that it was exactly intermediate between a Mourning Dove and a Zenaida Dove. Ridgway went so far as to say that should it ever prove to represent a distinct species, then the further separation of *Zenaidura* and *Zenaida* (as he defined the two genera) was no longer possible. I personally have examined the type and agree entirely with Salvadori and Ridgway that it does represent a hybrid; furthermore, being convinced that it is a hybrid I propose to treat it as one and drop it from further consideration.

If the views expressed in this paper are accepted, the genera discussed will then be constituted as follows; the question of recognition of certain subspecies will probably not differ greatly.

<i>Zenaidura macroura macroura</i> (Linn.)	<i>Zenaidura auriculata ruficauda</i> (Bonap.)
<i>Zenaidura macroura carolinensis</i> (Linn.)	<i>Zenaidura auriculata antioquiae</i> (Chapm.)
<i>Zenaidura macroura marginella</i> (Woodh.)	<i>Zenaidura auriculata vinaceorufa</i>
<i>Zenaidura macroura tresmariae</i> Ridgw.	(Ridgw.)
<i>Zenaidura macroura clarionensis</i> Towns.	<i>Zenaida aurita yucatanensis</i> Salvad.
<i>Zenaidura graysoni</i> Lawr.	<i>Zenaida aurita zenaida</i> (Bonap.)
<i>Zenaidura auriculata caucae</i> (Chapm.)	<i>Zenaida aurita aurita</i> (Temm.)
<i>Zenaidura auriculata hypoleuca</i> (Bonap.)	<i>Zenaida asiatica mearnsi</i> (Ridgw.)
<i>Zenaidura auriculata auriculata</i> (Des Murs)	<i>Zenaida asiatica asiatica</i> (Linn.)
<i>Zenaidura auriculata virgata</i> (Bert.)	<i>Zenaida asiatica australis</i> (Peters)
<i>Zenaidura auriculata noronha</i> (Sharpe)	<i>Zenaida asiatica meloda</i> (Tschudi)
<i>Zenaidura auriculata marajoensis</i> (Berlepsch)	<i>Nesopelia galapagoensis galapagoensis</i>
<i>Zenaidura auriculata jessiae</i> (Ridgw.)	(Gould)
<i>Zenaidura auriculata rubripes</i> (Lawr.)	<i>Nesopelia galapagoensis exsul</i> Roths. and Hart.

*Zenaida spadicea* Cory and *Z. lucida* Noble are synonyms of *Zenaida aurita zenaida*.

My best thanks are due Dr. Herbert Friedmann for the loan of the unique type of *Zenaidura yucatanensis* and a pair of *Zenaidura graysoni*; I am similarly indebted to Mr. J. T. Zimmer for the loan of a pair of *Zenaida asiatica meloda* from western Peru.

*Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, June 11, 1934.*

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Feeding Habits of Herons on Mission Bay, California.**—The Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) stood knee-deep in the water. Gaunt, alone and silent he might have been cast in bronze to picture eternal patience. His was the pose of frozen alertness—he was waiting, waiting for some luckless victim to swim within striking distance of his spear-like bill. Patience shall have its reward and all things come to him who waits. A light-fast stab, a flash, a splash, and the Blue Heron eats. This is his method of fishing.

The Blue Heron stood in a channel of the slough. It was low tide and all about him lay acres of uncovered mudflats. Among the hundreds of long-legged shore-birds that were scattered over the mudflats were other representatives of the heron tribe. Each representative had its own peculiar feeding habits and its own mannerisms.

The Blue was the largest heron. The next in point of size and nearest in feeding habits was the American Egret (*Casmerodius albus egretta*). In all his snowy white-

ness he stalked his prey along the shallow margin of the channel. The personification of stealth was pictured in his every movement. He moves forward with stately grace, each measured step paced with caution. He suddenly freezes, and now one can almost sense the gleam of his piercing eye. Cautiously, slowly he stretches his long neck forward, a foot is lifted, it moves, one stride forward, perhaps two strides. And now he assumes the out-stretched attitude of frozen eagerness. With perfect balance, without a flicker of movement he holds this pose until sure of his kill. A flash of gleaming whiteness, an upward toss of his head, a gulp or two and down goes the latest victim of his uncanny skill. Perhaps he shakes his feathers out a bit and he may reach down his long bill to adjust a feather or two. He now lifts high his head and looks about before moving on to the site of his next kill.

Then there is the little Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) who stalks the pools that lay scattered over the mudflats. No pool is too small to receive his attention. Walking slowly and quietly with a dignified stride, but lacking the stealthy alertness of the American Egret, the Snowy moves along. He is foraging and when he comes to a likely looking puddle he reaches one foot gently forward and with toes outspread he softly pats the surface of the pool. In this gentle way, without muddying the water, he stirs up any small fish that may be hiding in the pool, and in the clear water he is able to see and spear his fleeing victim. This foraging maneuver was about as clever a thing as I ever saw a bird do. He reached out so deliberately and patted so gently, and with his patting foot directly under his bill he was ready to strike with precision.

Besides these three there was the "Interloper"—a stranger from a foreign land who did not really belong on the mudflats of Mission Bay. When first seen he was quarreling with the Snowy Egret. He would crouch low, lean forward and out-stretch his neck, ruffle his shoulder feathers and run toward the Egret. Occasionally as he drew near the Snowy he would leap into the air and strike with his wings. In this manner, the Snowy retreating and the Interloper pursuing, the birds crossed a hundred yards of mudflat and then the Snowy took wing. The Interloper, not satisfied, continued the pursuit. He was the larger and the stronger on the wing. The Snowy was forced to dodge, turn, and dive as the birds winged far over the mudflats. Finally the two birds disappeared in the distance.

Ten minutes later the Interloper came sliding down the breeze to the section of the mudflat where he was originally seen. Now, no longer forced to share his feeding ground, he immediately started to forage. Again we were thrilled; never before had we seen a heron-like bird forage in such a strange manner. Instead of the slow stealthy movements of most herons this bird fairly raced about. His slowest movements were paced in a hurried trot, but most often he ran at a more rapid gait. But not only that, often when racing through a shallow pool he would leap into the air, turn about and land, racing in the opposite direction. Seemingly his method was to stir the fish into action and then to spear them on the run.

In his odd manner of foraging the Interloper covered much territory. When running he held his neck in a close S-shaped crook and this attitude coupled with his sudden upward leaps and his quick jerky side-steps gave to his hunting performance a most ludicrous aspect. Really he was an acrobat of parts. [The "Interloper" turned out to be the Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*), a rare visitor to California recorded a few times from the vicinity of San Diego.]—CHAS. W. MICHAEL, *Yosemite, California, June 4, 1934.*

**Notes on the Nesting of the Band-tailed Pigeon.**—There are a number of recorded instances of the nesting of the Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*) in the higher country of California; still a few notes on breeding in the lower elevations may prove of interest. In Pacific Coast Avifauna number 21, by George Willett, there is a record of the breeding of this bird as noted by me in the Oak Knoll district of Pasadena. This I thought, at the time (1928) an unusual occurrence. Since the date of finding that nest, I have been able further to observe the breeding habits of this pigeon in California.

My notes record the finding, on June 18, 1932, of a nest containing one newly hatched young on the Spring Valley Water Company property in San Mateo County. The nest was placed about twenty feet up in a redwood in a heavily wooded gulch directly to the westward of San Andreas Lake. While I searched diligently for other